

MEMORANDUM FOR: ~~EMP/PVW/HR/W~~

FYI--

NIOS have action. Gen Keegan, agreeing with the DCI position on PFIAB comments of the NIE, mostly for the wrong reasons.

Note in top paragraph of page 2 that all will be well if we purge a couple dozen people who are "responsible for attitudinal bias."

Copies to OSR? Anyone else?

OPR

OCI

None
11/25/75

File N10/SP

Date 24 Nov 1975

FORM 5-75 101 USE PREVIOUS EDITIONS

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USAF review(s) completed.

DCI/DDCI

DDF

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TO:

		ACTION	INFO.			ACTION	INFO.
1	DCI			11	LC		
2	DDCI			12	IG		
3	S/MC			13	Compt		
4	DDS&T		✓	14	Asst/DCI		
⑤	DDI		✓	15	AO/DCI		
6	DDM A			16	Ex/Sec		
7	DDO			17			
8	D/DCI/IC		✓	18			
9	D/DCI/NIO	✓		19			
10	GC			20			

SUSPENSE

Date

Remarks:

Responsible
pls

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DCI/DDCI

11/24/75

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
20330

Executive Registry



21 NOV 1975

Honorable William E. Colby
Director of Central Intelligence Agency

Noted by DCF
11/24/75

Dear Mr. Colby

I have reviewed the NSC staff and PFIAB proposals regarding possible revisions in the NIE process and your proposed response to the President.

Your proposed comments to the President opposing preparation of an experimental estimate by an independent analysis group are fully supported.

With regard to the PFIAB proposals concerning the exclusion of net assessments from NIE 11-3/8, you are aware of the objections I have raised in the past about this practice. In my opinion, such assessments tend to limit the alternatives available to the Secretary of Defense in arriving at U.S. force postures. In addition, I believe removal of net assessments from the NIE would enhance both its value and utility as a pure intelligence estimate. Accordingly, I recommend that your letter to the President include a statement to the effect that future NIE 11-3/8s will not include net assessments.

Regrettably, I am forced to agree with the PFIAB's general malaise about the National Estimates. In my judgment, the NIEs -including this year's NIE 11-3/8 Executive Summary - have consistently understated - often by a rather wide margin - the growth and development of Soviet military capability.

The recent critique by Dr. A. Wohlstetter of our intelligence projections supports such a view. A post-mortem of the last fifteen years of Air Force dissents to the NIEs would show that in the main the Air Force has been much closer to the mark than the NIEs. After more than twenty years involvement with the NIE process, I am convinced that the process is driven by subjective policy considerations and remains heavily influenced by the need to rationalize decisions made at the top.

I think great progress has been made during your administration in sharpening up the quality and character of NIE threat projections; however, the fundamental ills remain and they are profound. The threat is underestimated rather seriously - and understated, especially in advanced technology, an area where we are constrained by our dependence on U.S. mirror-image.

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REASON: 25X

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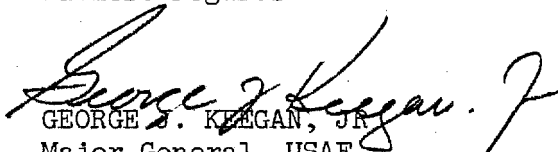
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I do not think any of the initiatives proposed by the PFIAB are likely to correct the softness of U. S. intelligence forecasts. Most of the measures proposed are cosmetic in nature and do little to focus on root cause. Nothing short of total isolation of the estimative function from proximity to the national policy process is likely to solve the problem. A total purging of those few really responsible for attitudinal bias (fewer than two dozen individuals) and a return of key analytical processes to the professional base are among the measures needed. All, of course, with adequate checks and balances.

I take great comfort that under your able aegis some independent judgments have been allowed. It has been a most noble start - and would that your even hand could be allowed to remain at the helm. Under your stewardship, the NIE process has improved markedly. For the first time in 23 years, our analysts are able to work together on something other than a feudal basis.

I indorse the other comments in your proposed letter.

Warmest regards


GEORGE J. KEEGAN, JR.
Major General, USAF
ACS/Intelligence

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